

The nights are getting cooler and citizens frequently ask if they can have small bonfires in their backyard. Frankfort Fire & EMS has put together this quick reference guide to answer these questions for you.

GRILLS

- Obviously grills are permitted. The fire code actually states that grills and cooking fires shall be constantly attended by a competent person until the fire is extinguished. This person shall have a garden hose or fire extinguisher readily available for use.
- The restrictions for use of grills in multi-family dwellings (i.e., 3 or more units) include: "No hibachi, gas-fired grill, charcoal grill or similar devices used for cooking, heating, or other purpose, shall be used or kindled on any balcony or under any overhanging portion or within 10 feet of any structure."

CHIMENEAS

- A chimenea is defined as a freestanding front-loading fireplace or oven with a bulbous body and usually a vertical smoke vent or chimney.
- Chimeneas are allowed within the same restrictions as grills (described above). However they must also have a screen or spark arrestor. They must also be on stands or legs at least six inches above grade if used on wooden decks or other combustible surfaces. If used on a concrete patio, or even on a lawn surface, they do not have to be raised. However raised chimeneas are always safer to allow for air flow underneath the fire box area.

FIRE PITS

- Fire pits commercially made may be gas-fired or wood burning and is designed to provide heat or a visual amenity. They are designed to be used on a deck or patio.
- Commercial fire pits are allowed within the same restrictions as grills (described above). However they also must have a screen or spark arrestor if wood burning. Gas-fired fire pits do not require a spark arrestor. They must also be on stands or legs at least six inches above grade if used on wooden decks or other combustible surfaces. If used on a concrete patio, or even on a lawn surface, they do not have to be raised. However, raised pits are always safer to allow for air flow underneath the fire box area.
- Fire pits simply consisting of a hole dug into the ground or a camp-fire type are considered open burning and are not permitted.

If you have any questions or need clarification regarding unusual situations or circumstances that are encountered and not covered by this guide, please contact the City of Frankfort Fire Marshal at (502) 875-8539.